



Sunsmart Policy

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to encourage behaviours at Forest Street Primary School that protect staff and students from the harmful effects of UV radiation and the risk of skin cancer.

This policy provides guidelines to:

- support staff and students to use a combination of sun protection measures when UV levels are 3 or above (mid-August – the end of April) and allow sun exposure when UV levels are below 3 (May – mid-August)
- ensure that there are outdoor environments that provide adequate shade for students and staff
- ensure students are encouraged and supported to develop independent sun protection skills to help them to be responsible for their own protection
- support our school's strategies to meet its duty of care and occupational health and safety obligations to minimise harmful UV exposure and associated harm for students and staff.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all school activities, including camps and excursions. It is applicable to all students and staff.

POLICY

- To assist with the implementation of this policy, staff and students are encouraged to access the daily local sun protection times via the [SunSmart widget](#) on the school's website, the free [SunSmart app](#), or at sunsmart.com.au.
- The sun protection measures listed are used for all outdoor activities during the **daily local sun protection times**.
- *The sun protection times are a forecast from the Bureau of Meteorology for the time of day UV levels are forecast to reach 3 or higher. At these levels, sun protection is recommended for all skin types. In Victoria, UV levels regularly reach 3 or higher from mid-August to the end of April.*

Excessive exposure to the sun can cause health problems including sunburn, dehydration, damage to skin and eyes, and an increased risk of skin cancer.

Too little UV exposure from the sun can lead to low Vitamin D levels. Vitamin D is essential for healthy muscles and bones, and overall health.

UV radiation:

- cannot be seen or felt
- can be reflected off surfaces such as buildings, asphalt, concrete, water, sand and snow
- can pass through light clouds
- varies in intensity across the year (highest in Victoria from mid-August - April)
- peaks during school hours

A combination of sun protection measures should be put in place from mid-August to the end of April.

Forest Street Primary School has the following measures in place to help reduce the risk of excessive UV sun exposure for staff and students.

Shade

Forest Street will provide for sufficient options for shelter and trees to provide shade on school grounds, particularly in places such as:

- playground equipment
- sandpit areas
- several large trees in popular play areas
- outdoor learning space
- covered walkways

When building works or grounds maintenance is conducted at Forest Street that may impact on the level of shading available to staff and students, a review of the shaded areas available will be conducted and further shading installed as appropriate.

Students are encouraged to use available areas of shade when outside.

Sun protective uniform/clothing

Forest Street's school uniform and dress code includes sun-protective clothing, including:

- loose, cool, closely-woven fabric
- shirts with a collar and/or high necklines
- broad brimmed or bucket hat

At recess and lunch times, outdoor excursions/camps from mid-August to the end of April and whenever UV levels reach 3 and above, all students **must** wear a hat when playing outside.

Staff and students are to wear hat styles that protect the face, neck and ears when outdoors, for example broad-brimmed, legionnaire or bucket.

Students are required to wear a school hat or another hat style that protects the face, neck and ears when outdoors, for example broad-brimmed, legionnaire or bucket. Students who may not be wearing appropriate protective clothing or a hat may be asked to play in the shade or in a suitable area protected from the sun.

Sunscreen

The school supplies SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen for staff and student's use.

Forest Street encourages all staff and students to apply SPF 30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen daily from mid-August to the end of April and whenever UV levels reach 3 and above. Sunscreen should be applied at least 20 minutes before going outdoors, and reapplied every two hours, or more frequently if sweating or swimming.

Strategies are in place to remind students to apply sunscreen before going outdoors (e.g., reminder notices, sunscreen monitors, sunscreen buddies).

Students have access to sunscreen in their classroom and sick bay.

Staff and families should role model SunSmart behaviour and are encouraged to apply SPF 30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen when outside from mid-August to the end of April and whenever UV levels reach 3 and above.

Curriculum

Students at our school are encouraged to make healthy choices, and are supported to understand the benefits and risks of sun exposure.

Programs on sun protection are included in the curriculum for all year levels.

Forest St Primary is a SunSmart school. The school website features a widget that shows the sun protection times, temperature and the maximum UV Index for the day in Ballarat. Students and parents are reminded both at assembly and on the school newsletter that hats are compulsory from mid-August to the end of April and whenever UV levels reach 3 and above. SunSmart behaviour is regularly reinforced and promoted to the whole school community.

As part of OHS UV risk controls and role-modelling, staff, families and visitors:

- wear a sun protective hat, covering clothing and, if practical, sunglasses;
- apply sunscreen; and
- seek shade whenever possible

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- School Policy Advisory Guide:
 - [Sun and UV Protection Policy](#)
 - [Duty of care](#)

- [SunSmart](#)

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last updated on 11th December 2018 and is scheduled for review 2021.